Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2437
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL BELIZE IMMEDIATE

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E.O.: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, UK, BH, GT, ME
SUBJECT: BELIZE: OWEN/PRICE TALKS CONCLUDED

REF: LONDON 1237

1. FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO COMMONS JANUARY 25 AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS TALKS WITH BELIZIAN PRIME MINISTER PRICE: QUOTE I CONFIRMED THAT ANY SETTLEMENT MUST BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF BELIZE. I SAID THAT RECENT BRITISH DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GUATEMALANS HAD BEEN EXPLORATORY; HAD BEEN MADE OR WOULD BE MADE WHICH WERE NOT SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE PEOPLE OF BELIZE.

THE PREMIER OF BELIZE ASKED THAT THE ISSUE SHOULD BE PUT DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE OF BELIZE AND THAT THE COMMONWEALTH SHOULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCESS OF CONSULTATION. I READILY AGREED TO BOTH THESE REQUESTS.

BOTH GOVERNMENTS AGREED THAT THEIR AIM WAS EARLY AND SECURE INDEPENDENCE FOR BELIZE.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE THEIR SEARCH FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, WHICH HAS NOT YET
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BEEN ACHIEVED IN DISCUSSIONS WITH GUATEMALA AND OTHER INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS. UNQUOTE

2. PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE, PRICE HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT NOR THE PARTY HE HEADS WILL AGREE TO CEDE "EVEN ONE SQUARE INCH OF TERRITORY"

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TO GUATEMALA;

--DESPITE RECENT STATEMENTS BY HMG AND THE GOM, ANY CESSION OF TERRITORY TO GUATEMALA WOULD TRIGGER AN IMMEDIATE MEXICAN CLAIM TO TERRITORY IN THE NORTH;

--THE PROPOSALS PUT TO HIM BY HMG AND THE USG (APPARENTLY REFERS TO HIS MIAMI MEETING WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN) COULD ONLY HAVE ONE RESULT -- THE THREE WAY PARTITION OF BELIZE; AND

--ALTHOUGH HMG HAD ASKED HIM TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE DISCUSSIONS OF THE PAST SIX MONTHS, THE TIME HAD COME TO BREAK HIS SILENCE AND TELL THE PEOPLE OF BELIZE WHAT HAD OCCURED.

3. OPINION IN UK SEEMS UNIFORMLY HOSTILE TO ANY SETTLEMENT INVOLVING TERRITORIAL CONCESSION TO GUATEMALA. THIS WAS THE THRUST OF QUESTIONS FROM BOTH LABOR AND CONSERVATIVE MPS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS JANUARY 24 AND HAS SINCE BEEN REPEATED EDITORIALLY BY THE TIMES (JANUARY 26) AND THE GUARDIAN (JANUARY 24 AND 26).

4. THE LABOR PARTY'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) TOOK THE SAME POSITION JANUARY 25 WHEN IT APPROVED AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION CALLING ON HMG TO: SUPPORT THE UN AND COMMONWEALTH LEADERS' RESOLUTIONS TO PRESERVE THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BELIZE; AND INFORM THE GOVERN-MENTS OF GUATEMALA AND MEXICO THAT NO CARVE UP OF

BELIZIAN TERRITORY WILL BE PERMITTED. THE RESOLUTION ALSO CALLED ON QUOTE PRESIDENT CARTER, IN PURSUANCE OF HIS HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, TO END THE SUPPLY OF U.S. ARMS AND TRAINING FACILITIES TO GUATEMALA, WHICH CAN ONLY ADD TO THE THREAT UNQUOTE TO BELIZE. WE UNDERSTAND THE LABOR PARTY WILL BE COMMUNICATING WITH THE EMBASSY IN THE COURSE OF THE DAY TO ADVISE US OFFICIALLY OF THE RESOLUTION.

5. DEPARTMENT ACTION: REQUEST GUIDANCE FOR A REPLY TO THE LABOR PARTY'S DEMARCHE.

BREWSTER

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